

AMENDMENT TO THE DRAWINGS

Applicants submit herewith a replacement drawing sheet, marked in the top margin with the indicia "Replacement Sheet" in accordance with the requirements under 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. No new matter has been introduced by this submission.

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated October 7, 2005, in which the shortened period for response expires on January 7, 2006. Accordingly, this response is timely filed.

Summary of Office Action

Applicants' claims 1-6 are currently pending in the above-identified patent application. Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention.

The specification and drawings were objected to due to informalities.

Applicants' Reply to Objection of the Specification and Drawings

The specification and drawings were objected to due to various informalities identified by the Examiner on page 2 of the Office Action. Applicants have addressed the objections to the specification and drawings, respectively, on pages 4 and 5 of this paper.

Applicants' Reply to Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. More specifically, the Examiner asserts that the scope of claims 1 and 4 are unclear because the imparting and forming steps as claimed occur on machined surfaces (past tense), which implies a machining step prior to the imparting and forming steps. The Examiner correctly notes that this contradicts the specification in which the imparting and forming steps occur as part of the machining process.

Applicants submit that use of the phrase "machined surface" was inadvertent and due to an error in translating corresponding Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-229437, in which priority is claimed. Applicants have proposed amending the claims, as reflected under the heading Listing of Claims beginning on page 2 of this paper, to clarify the discrepancy in the claimed invention.

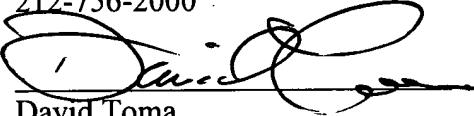
Conclusion

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the claimed invention as defined by amended independent claim 1, claims 2 and 3 which depend therefrom, and amended independent claim 4, claims 5 and 6 which depend therefrom, are patentable.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that this patent application, as amended, is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and prompt allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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